

Budgeting For a New Bathroom Renovation

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Updating your bathroom is a solid investment in the value of your home – who isn't looking for that spa-like feeling when you enter your bathroom? Outdated bathrooms are a major reason why homes don't sell quickly (or at asking price) yet research shows that an average bathroom remodel can yield up to a 70% return on its investment cost. And until you sell, you get to enjoy living with a beautiful, new bathroom.

So how is this done without breaking the bank and what things do you need to consider before starting?

1. FOOTPRINT

Let's talk about the big things first. Will walls need to be moved or will you be keeping the same footprint for the bathroom? Oftentimes clients want to expand their bathroom and use some space from an adjoining hall closet or bedroom space. Doing so allows people to then add a second sink, expand a shower, add a soaking tub or simply more storage. But these things come at a cost – every time you move a wall, there are construction costs to do so and depending on whether or not it is load-bearing, there may be additional implications. Additionally, the more plumbing you relocate, especially toilets, the more you will drive the price higher.

Thinking about these types of decisions before you meet with a professional certainly helps with the project planning. If you are content with your current layout and just need a refresher (often called a "rip and replace"), that will certainly help keep your bottom line more manageable. In an R&R, the tub, shower/enclosure, sink(s), toilet, enclosure, vanity, mirrors, plumbing fixtures, lighting, sheetrock, wall tiles and floor tiles would all be replaced. There will be a plumbing and electrical component as well but not as significant as if locations were changing.

2. TO TUB OR NOT TO TUB

The growing trend with standard bathroom remodels is to remove the shorter bathtubs from the 50's-90's and convert that 30" x 60" space to a shower area. In primary baths, people are removing those large deck mounted tubs (oftentimes on platform) and replacing them either with freestanding tubs or smaller profile models....or removing them entirely. Some real estate professionals will suggest that there should be at least one tub in your home for resale purposes but that may not always be the case as you consider the demographics of the community where you live.

Once you decide you want a shower, there are options for pre-formed units or there are custom tile shower areas; the former are limited in terms of styles and sizes, the latter comes with countless options and a better aesthetic, but the price tag follows that. Separating your needs from your "nice-to-have" items will also help keep things in check. Who doesn't want eight body sprays, a rain head, a fixed head, an adjustable hand held and digitally programmable controls? But is it a priority?

3. AGING IN PLACE

Many families find themselves with aging relatives living in their homes. When it comes to a bathroom, this often means needing the ability to have a curbless shower with an integrated bench, handheld shower heads, well located grab bars and a bit more space to maneuver walkers and wheelchairs. If this is something you need to consider, talk to a designer about the best way to incorporate these features into

your renovation. Better to plan ahead and be ready than to be scrambling when the time comes that you need it.

4. SHARED SPACES

Do you need a single, double or multiple vanities for a shared bathroom? Some couples like to have their own individual sinks, others may prefer to share a wide trough sink in order to gain more countertop space and even others will have separate vanities on opposite or adjoining walls. If you are sharing a space, you want the design to support your daily routines without feeling restricted and provide the amount of storage needed for multiple people. Think about your schedules. Are you both in the bathroom at the same time each morning? Evening? Do you prefer privacy walls or a toilet room? Is there adequate ventilation to keep everyone happy? These are the kind of questions a good designer will ask as you work together.

5. BUDGETING

STANDARD BATHROOM RENOVATION – Rip & Replace

This is a standard 5' x 8' (40 sf) hall bathroom with a tub where the following items are replaced: floor tiles, wall tiles around tub, shower enclosure, single sink in a semi-custom vanity with quartz countertop and splash, plumbing fixtures (sink faucet, shower head(s) and controls), toilet, mirror/medicine cabinet and lighting fixtures.

Average Price Range: \$25k - \$30k

STANDARD BATHROOM RENOVATION – Expanded/Reconfigured Space

This includes all the features above but also involves the construction and framing associated with expanding the footprint of the bathroom.

Average Price Range: \$30k - \$40k

PRIMARY BATHROOM RENOVATION – Rip & Replace

This would be a larger bathroom, typically part of the primary suite, but larger than the standard 5' x 8' (40 sf). It will often include both a tub and a large custom-sized shower, a double vanity (or two individual ones) and privacy walls around the toilet. More luxury comfort features tend to be included (i.e., heated towel bars, make-up area, bidet, shower benches, shower jets etc.) and that drives the price up both for materials and for installation.

Average Price Range: \$45k - \$55k

PRIMARY BATHROOM RENOVATION – Expanded/Reconfigured Space

This includes all the features above but also involves the construction and framing involved with expanding the footprint of the bathroom.

Average Price Range: \$55k - \$85k

Note: Powder room (half bath) remodels are in the \$8k - \$12k range.

Can these prices be lowered? Yes, but that requires compromise and economical selections.

A full bathroom remodel is rarely below \$25k unless entry-level (builder grade) materials are used and/or the design includes a simple tub with shower curtain.